

# GEORGIA

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# BATTLEFIELDS

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Published by Georgia Battlefields Association, Inc., a non-profit organization dedicated to preservation of Georgia's Civil War history and sites. Contact newsletter editor by e-mail: [info@georgiabattlefields.org](mailto:info@georgiabattlefields.org)

## **Governor's budget again ignores marker maintenance**

A growing number of historical markers are missing or damaged. The newsletter has reported on this lamentable condition several times (May and February 2005, November 2003). Previous GBA attempts to prompt action through publicity and appeals to legislators were supplemented by a 16 August 2005 letter (extracted below) from the GBA president to Governor Perdue.

Dear Governor Perdue,

Please consider restoring the state historical marker maintenance program.

In past years, marker maintenance was usually allocated a little over \$200,000; but the Panola Mountain State Park marker maintenance shop was closed for budget reasons in October 2003. The farther we get from that date, the more the program falls behind. Today, at least 40 markers are stored at the Panola Mountain facility, and dozens more are stored at state parks around the state. In addition, several markers are missing altogether. Recently, I noticed a marker missing and called the State Parks & Historic Sites Division of DNR. In this case, they were unaware of the marker's disappearance and are hoping some local authority has recovered it.

The missing markers are a detriment to Georgia's attempts to foster tourism. In some cases, visitors come to Georgia specifically to see historic sites. The missing markers hinder these folks from finding a site. Further, the missing markers send a message to local people that the state government doesn't care about Georgia's history.

I appreciate what you've done to keep the state fiscally sound by reducing state spending over the last few years. Still, marker maintenance is a relatively cheap program that could pay big dividends in both tourist spending and a renewed sense of pride among Georgia residents.

Thanks for your consideration.

In a 20 September 2005 reply, the Governor wrote:

Thank you for bringing this issue to my attention. Historic markers in the State of Georgia are vital in our efforts to foster tourism. This is an important issue that I will forward to the Department of Natural Resources for response.

No response from DNR has been received thus far, and the budget presented by the Governor to the General Assembly in January again failed to include any funds for marker maintenance. Updated information indicates about 25% of the approximately 2200 state historical markers (about 850 relating to the Civil War) are damaged or missing. If you think failure to address this situation is shortsighted, please contact the governor or your state senator or representative now, while the legislature is in session.

## **Phoenix Flies program will feature GBA Battle of Atlanta tour**

The Atlanta Preservation Center annually presents the Phoenix Flies program to highlight sites worth saving within the city. Georgia Battlefields Association is now a partner in the program and will present a tour of Battle of Atlanta sites in the Inman Park area at 1 p.m. on Wednesday, 8 March. To sign up for the GBA tour or to see a complete schedule of all the tours, visit the web site [www.preserveatlanta.com](http://www.preserveatlanta.com) or call 404 688 3353 x11.

## **Battle of Atlanta marker vandalized**

One of two Battle of Atlanta markers installed by GBA in July 2004 was spray-painted sometime in October. The reverse of the marker, relating to the history of Inman Park as Atlanta's first suburb, was similarly defaced. Thanks to the Atlanta Preservation Center for reporting the incident and for attempting to clean off the paint.

## **GBA trustees hold annual meeting: Elaine Rivers resigns**

The GBA trustees conduct much business by e-mail and phone, and we meet in smaller groups as needed; but we normally hold at least one full meeting in January of each year. The most significant news from our 15 January meeting is the departure of Elaine Rivers as secretary and trustee. Elaine and her husband Bob (who served as a trustee until 2002) worked hard for GBA and continue to support our preservation efforts. Our thanks and best wishes to them both.

Olly Keller, Valerie Lyons, and Charlie Crawford also had terms expiring in 2006. Each was reelected as a trustee through January 2009. Continuing to serve as trustees are Charlie Geiger, Gene Murphy, Frank Chew, and John Cissell. The finances of the organization are sound, and Frank Chew has proven to be an able treasurer. We hope to move on at least one property in 2006, though the opportunities to buy are not predictable. Other efforts that GBA will continue:

- Conduct tours to raise funds for preservation.
- Provide presentations to raise awareness of endangered sites.
- Publish monthly newsletter on preservation issues.
- Arrange installation of historical markers.
- Appear at government meetings to support preservation.
- Contact executive branch members and legislators to ask for support for preservation.
- Provide information to news media.
- Cooperate with other preservation organizations.

## **Thanks to those receiving newsletter by e-mail**

Several of our members responded to our request to consider receiving the newsletter by e-mail. Not only does this save us postage, but those members receiving the newsletter electronically will always be first to get the news, as we send you the e-mail on the same day that we submit the original to the printers. Should you ever have any trouble receiving the newsletter by e-mail, let us know so we can restore you to the mailing list for the printed version, since our first objective is for our members to enjoy all the privileges of membership.

## **Civil War Sesquicentennial approaches**

With this issue, *Georgia Battlefields* begins a series that will review significant events leading up to the Civil War. On 2 February 1856, 150 years ago, the U.S. House of Representatives elects Nathaniel Banks of Massachusetts as speaker after two months of negotiating, during which sectional differences dominate the process. On 11 February, President Franklin Pierce issues a proclamation warning the pro- and anti-slavery factions in Kansas to stop the violence. The proclamation will be largely ineffective, and "Bleeding Kansas" will suffer for years before the anti-slavery forces triumph and Kansas is admitted as a free state.

## **Last chance to sign up for 2-5 March Ed Bearss tour**

This year's Ed Bearss tour will focus on Cobb County sites. Reserve a place by sending a check for \$350 per person, payable to GBA, to Frank Chew, 7 Camden Rd NE, Atlanta GA 30309.

- Each registrant must be a GBA member. See [www.georgiabattlefields.org](http://www.georgiabattlefields.org) for an application.
- GBA group rate of \$75 plus tax is available at Holiday Inn Express, 2485 Busbee Parkway, Kennesaw GA 30144. Call 770 427 5210. If approaching the hotel from the south along I-75, take exit 269 (Barrett Parkway), but be sure to stay in the lane marked for Busbee Parkway.
- You won't need a coat and tie for any of the events.

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